

# 2013 City of Austin Google Fiber Community Connections Program Application and Instructions

Google has announced plans to bring Google Fiber to Austin residents. The plan calls for building an ultra, high speed broadband network with Internet speeds of one gigabit per second, up to 100 times faster than normal to Austin's homes.

Google has agreed to provide up to 100 sites with broadband Internet services through its fiber network free of charge until April 8, 2023 in addition to City Hall and the new Central Library. These Community Connections will be to public or non-profit sites in the City of Austin that provide access and services directly to Austinites through what is being called the Community Connections program. Under the agreement with Google Fiber, the City of Austin will create the proposed list of sites for the program.

It is the City Council's goal to ensure an application and selection process that is transparent, available to all, and utilizes a clear set of [selection criteria](#) adopted by the City Council. Community Connections aims to provide fiber speed internet access directly to the public and will serve for innovation and digital inclusion, resulting in advancements unique to Austin's spirit.

Attached is the Community Connections Site Application, which is due by September 30, 2013.

Please direct questions to the City's Telecommunications & Regulatory Affairs Office at [digital.inclusion@austintexas.gov](mailto:digital.inclusion@austintexas.gov) or 512-974-2999.

For more information and application: [austintexas.gov/digitalinclusion](http://austintexas.gov/digitalinclusion)

Thank you for your consideration.





## Community Connections Site Selection Application Form

The City of Austin will propose **100** public or non-profit organizations to receive Google Fiber connections at their locations.

### **Application Packet**

In order to be considered for selection, please submit the following items:

- **General Application Form.** Complete this form (ensuring that it is signed and dated).
- **Criteria Form. Complete this form as fully as possible.** If the organization offers services at more than one location, the applicant should complete the Criteria Form for each location and prioritize the single location that will benefit the most from having a gigabit of service.

### **Application Submission**

All applications are due in the Office of Telecommunications & Regulatory Affairs (TARA) before **4:45 p.m. on Friday, September 30, 2013**. Late applications will not be considered.

Submissions may be submitted by email or snail mail to:

Email: [digital.inclusion@austintexas.gov](mailto:digital.inclusion@austintexas.gov)

Address: City of Austin - Municipal Building -124 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 210, Austin, Texas 78701

Phone: 512.974.2999

### **Application Review Process**

#### ***Community Applications***

- August 26, 2013 - Community Site Applications Available
- September 30, 2013 - Deadline for Site Applications for Community Connections
- October 1-31, 2013 - Staff Review & Assessment

#### ***Site List Adoption***

- November 6, 2013 – Community Tech & Telecommunications Commission - Discussion & Input
- November 13, 2013 – Emerging Technology & Telecommunications Council Committee - Discussion & Recommendation to Council
- November 21, 2013 - Council Discussion & Adoption of Community Connection Site List
- End of 2013 - Google Fiber requested deadline for Community Connection Site List from City

### **Privacy Statement**

This information is being collected and will be used to assist in determining your organization's eligibility and qualification for receiving a community connection on the City's proposed site list. This information provided may be published by the City. Any information collected, assembled, or maintained by or for a governmental body is subject to the Public Information Act.



## Community Connections General Application Form

*(Please complete this portion of application only once per organization if submitting for multiple sites)*

General Application Form

**Applicant Organization Name:** Austin Children's Shelter

**Alias/DBA:** n/a

**Program Name for Google Fiber Connection:** Austin Children's Shelter

**Organization Mission and Purpose:** Austin Children's Shelter primarily serves children, youth, young adults, and families from Austin, Texas and its surrounding cities and counties, but we accept children in residential and foster care services from all over the State of Texas. We are guided by the mission to protect and heal children, young adults, and families in need. We believe that every child and young adult in our community deserves safety and security, and all our programs and services are designed to help abuse survivors recover from trauma and break the cycle of abuse. We provide: emergency shelter care, teen parent program with parent education and support, transitional living program for youth ages 17-22, the Strong Start program, residential respite care, a child placing service, and a Child Development and Family Support Center (opening in January, 2014).

**Organization Website:** [www.austinchildrenshelter.org](http://www.austinchildrenshelter.org)

**Contact Name:** Scott G. McKinlay, Operations Director

**City:** Austin

**State:** Texas

**Zip:** 78723

**Phone:** 512-499-0090

**Email:** [scott@austinchildrenshelter.org](mailto:scott@austinchildrenshelter.org)

**Location(s) applying for site selection (including physical address of location) and how long your organization plans on being at each location:** 4800 Manor Road, Austin, TX 78723. ACS owns the property and does not plan to move at any point in the future.

**Type of Organization:**

☒ Non-Profit

☐ Public Entity

**Number of years in operation:** 29 years

**Number of employees at location:** 115





## Community Connections Criteria Form

*(Please complete this portion of application for each location in an electronic document and please explain each response, 1000 words maximum per response, please)*

### Criteria Form

Please include location if applying for more than one location:

#### Organization

1. What is your agency's vision?

Austin Children's Shelter protects and heals children, young adults and families in need. Our goal is to end abuse and neglect; to create a community and a world that has no need of a shelter for abused or neglected children.

2. What is your agency's mission and purpose?

Austin Children's Shelter primarily serves children, youth, young adults, and families from Austin, Texas and its surrounding cities and counties, but we accept children in residential and foster care services from all over the State of Texas. We are guided by the mission to protect and heal children, young adults, and families in need. We believe that every child and young adult in our community deserves safety and security, and all our programs and services are designed to help abuse survivors recover from trauma and break the cycle of abuse. We provide: emergency shelter care, teen parent program with parent education and support, transitional living program for youth ages 17-22, the Strong Start program, residential respite care, a child placing service, and a Child Development and Family Support Center (opening in January, 2014).

3. Please list your organization's affiliations, community partnerships, certifications, and/or accreditations.

Our experiences and research support our belief that children are best served in their own communities, with support for families and extended networks that serve to build and maintain the connections that underpin success. As a long-term and respected Austin institution, Austin Children's Shelter is uniquely positioned to serve at the hub of this community continuum of care. The organization works collaboratively across many community service agencies (e.g. Goodwill, People's Community Clinic, Collaboracare for Kids, SafePlace, Foundation Communities, The Settlement Home, Helping Hand Home, CASA, and many more) has a history of generating and stewarding significant philanthropic support, and has an experienced and professional staff. As a community based non-profit, our only commitment is to our vision of creating community systems and connections that support healthy parenting and wrap-around and support at-risk children and families.

As part of our commitment to community action ACS formed a strategic partnership with SafePlace, another organization with a long history of serving vulnerable populations in Austin, to create the LIFT Alliance. Long-term research studies have shown the connection between child abuse, domestic violence,





and sexual assault. Working together, the LIFT Alliance partner agencies are developing programs and systems with the purpose to end abuse, through community partnerships, education, training, and advocacy.

4. What is the total number of unduplicated clients served by your organization at this location last fiscal year?

In 2012, ACS served 227 unduplicated clients, including 157 in our Emergency Shelter Program, 36 in our Teen Mother Program, 36 in our Transitional Living Program, and 11 in respite care.

In 2013 with the incorporation of the Strong Start program into ACS we are on track to serve approximately 500 unduplicated clients. With the planned opening of Child Development and Family Support Center in January 2014 and our new Foster in Austin Program, ACS estimates that it will be serving approximately 600 unduplicated clients next year.

5. Briefly provide an overview of your organization and the services it offers.

The Austin Children's Shelter was established in 1984 in response to a community need for emergency shelter and care for abused and neglected children. Over succeeding years, ACS has remained consistent in its belief that every child deserves a safe home, the love and support of a caring community, and the tools and resources to live up to his or her potential. For the first 25 years of our existence we primarily worked toward achieving that vision by providing emergency, residential shelter for young children that had been removed from their homes because of abuse and neglect. But our own experiences, as well as research on child welfare that resulted in changes in the systems for child protection, provided the impetus for our embracing a broader continuum. Our goal has evolved to being about ending child abuse and neglect; to creating a community and world that has no need of a shelter for abused and neglected children. We have grown in our understanding that child protection and healing are more nuanced and complex than simply providing basic needs for children that have already experienced horrific abuse. We have learned to engage, teach, and prepare foster and other at-risk children and young adults to be safe and to learn the skills needed to be successful in navigating the world. Perhaps most importantly, we have embraced the importance of focusing attention on creating and sustaining healthy and safe families, in addition to responding after abuse has occurred.

Our current programs extend across City of Austin boundaries and include: Emergency Shelter Care, Transitional Living Program, Teen Parent Program, Respite Care, Foster in Austin, Strong Start and, beginning in January 2014, our Child Development and Family Support Center (CDFSC) and our newly licensed foster to adopt program will be operational.

In 2009, ACS' single program consisted of emergency shelter for up to 90 days for children birth to age 18. Beginning in 2010, and with a move to its new seven-acre campus, residential capacity was increased from 30 to 78 children, staff more than doubled from 50 to 110, and the transitional living, respite and teen parent programs were added. Our days of shelter care grew from 5,600 in 2009 to an astonishing 18,000 in 2012. In 2013 the existing Strong Start program merged with ACS, thus expanding non-residential and child abuse prevention services, Foster in Austin was started and a foster to adopt program was licensed. In addition, ACS worked with SafePlace to become founding partners in January 2013 of LIFT, an alliance of victim service agencies all working toward eliminating child, sexual and domestic violence and abuse. In January 2014 we will open the CDFSC and the foster to adopt program will become fully operational, further expanding our community continuum.



6. Describe the community issues your organization is attempting to address. Include a description of the population most at risk of experiencing the issues described.

ACS is focused on addressing issues of children, young adults and families who are recovering from abuse or neglect. 64,366 children and teens were confirmed victims of child abuse and neglect in the State of Texas during FY 2012 and of those, there were 3,045 confirmed victims in Travis County.

The impact of child abuse on our clients and the effect on the community is staggering:

- Children who have been abused and neglected are least 25% more likely to experience problems such as delinquency, teen pregnancy, low academic achievement, drug use, and mental health problems.
- As many as 80% of young adults who had been abused met the diagnostic criteria for at least one psychiatric disorder at age 21 -- including depression, anxiety, eating disorders and suicide attempts.
- One third of abused and neglected children will eventually victimize their own children.
- According to the Texas Commission on Children and Youth, children who grow up in violent homes are:
  - 6 times more likely to commit suicide
  - 24 times more likely to commit sexual assault
  - 74 times more likely to commit crimes against another person
  - 50 times more likely to abuse alcohol or drugs

Child abuse and neglect occur in all segments of our society, but the risk is greater in isolated families and those where parents have problems with drugs or alcohol. ACS takes a whole approach to the complex issues surrounding abuse and neglect, and provides services to children, young adults and families in an attempt to break the cycle of violence. Part of this effort is to reduce the isolation of at risk families by helping develop organic support networks in the community.

7. Describe the demographics (e.g. ethnicity, gender, age, and income levels) and geographic characteristics of the community members your organization serves.

Austin Children's Shelter primarily serves children, youth, young adults, and families from Austin, Texas and its surrounding cities and counties, but we accept children in residential and foster care services from all over the State of Texas. In years' past, children in emergency shelter care were generally at the shelter for less than 90 days, but we are seeing an increase in length of stay as the average age of children has risen and the nature of their needs require longer and more intensive interventions. The client population served is racially diverse; approximately 51% of our current clients are Hispanic, 23% are African American, 22% are Anglo, and 4% other. One hundred percent of our current clients face social, educational, and/or economic risk factors. Our population and services can best be further described by program.

Emergency Shelter Program: Provides short-term care for children from birth to age 18 who have, for the most part, been removed from their homes by DFPS due to abuse, abandonment, and neglect. Some referrals for emergency care are accepted from partner agencies in order to provide temporary relief and assistance to work toward maintaining family permanency and for emergency shelter for older homeless youth when appropriate. By serving both genders and all ages, the Emergency Shelter Program is uniquely positioned to accept sibling groups, allowing children to stay together during a critical and uncertain time. The length of stay in Emergency Care has increased from an average of 30 days just a few years ago to a 126-day average in 2012 and has been as long as 405 days. Many times a teen will enter



Emergency Care with the goal of moving to the Transitional Living Program as they approach age 18, making for a more seamless continuum of care and further extending average length of stay.

Transitional Living Program: The majority of our TLP clients are young people age 17 to 22 who have been in the foster care system long-term and have chosen to remain in, or return to, foster care, recognizing they need additional preparation for independent living. Many of these young adults will live with us for several years as they finish school and learn the skills necessary to live on their own.

Teen Parent Program: The Teen Parent Program is provided for young parents who are currently in the foster care system with their children as well as other young parents with their children who are deemed to be at high risk for abuse. Primarily moms, with their children, live in a cottage on the ACS campus for as long as several years where they receive intensive parenting support and education. Our longest term teen parent resident to date was in the residential program with her children for 891 days.

Respite Care: ACS provides temporary, non-routine relief for parents and legal guardians of children from birth to age 18. This service is primarily provided for children with emotional or developmental disabilities through a contract with Austin/Travis County Integral Care but may also be made available for families by referral through partner agencies and Child Protective Services.

Foster in Austin: ACS is a licensed Child Placing Agency. In that role, ACS recruits, assesses, trains, monitors and supports foster families in Central Texas. Children in Foster in Austin are age birth to 18 years and have all been removed from their homes by DFPS because of severe abuse and neglect.

Strong Start: Strong Start serves families with children up to age five who have life circumstances that make them more vulnerable to abuse and neglect such as unemployment, a history of abuse in the family, mental health issues, substance abuse, or other stressors. Families may voluntarily enter the program or be referred through a partner agency. Through a combination of services, including therapeutic early childhood services, in-home parent coaching, parenting classes, support groups, mental health, and basic needs assistance, Strong Start teaches parents effective, non-violent parenting techniques while enhancing child social emotional development and decreasing challenging child behaviors.

Child Development and Family Support Center: Using an inclusion model, the CDFSC serves children and families from varying backgrounds and experiences. This includes families who are in need of support due to child welfare involvement, children of ACS staff, and families in the community who are in need of affordable, quality childcare. The CDFSC is a comprehensive program combining high-quality early childcare with essential parent education and support to help families stay safe, strong and self-sufficient.

Foster to Adopt: Our expectation is that all families and children in this program will have prior involvement with Foster in Austin.

8. Describe your organization's accessibility (e.g. accessible main entrance, within blocks of a public bus stop, etc.).

The 7-acre ACS campus was constructed in 2009 and is fully ADA-compliant and all five cottages and two administrative buildings are accessible to wheelchairs. It is located near Manor Road and 51<sup>st</sup> Street with bus stops within two blocks and good support for pedestrian and bike access.







9. If selected, how will your organization incorporate Google Fiber into the services it offers?

We anticipate that Google Fiber will have a large impact on the quality of the services that we provide to our clients and the community. Specifically, the ACS campus houses the staff of the LIFT Alliance, which is a collaborative effort of community groups working towards the common goal of addressing violence against the most vulnerable members of our community. As a result, the impact of the Google Fiber connection at ACS will not only be on the programs and services offered by ACS but also on our partners, such as SafePlace. Our strategy of centralization of LIFT Alliance staff and functions at the ACS campus will be served well by the capabilities provided by a Google Fiber connection, and this strategy will ensure that the community impact of a Google Fiber installation will not be limited to the ACS campus or our clients, but will also benefit the clients served by our partners in the LIFT Alliance.

A Google Fiber connection will be greatly beneficial to the client services provided by ACS, particularly our ongoing efforts to connect clients with educational, life skills, and job training opportunities that are afforded by the Internet. One of the challenges that our clients face is building support networks. Although technology cannot in itself provide those networks, it can provide effective tools to enable and promote their creation. A Google Fiber connection would assist our efforts to connect our clients to resources, including family and community support systems, the courts and other private and public services.

10. The City of Austin requires an annual report explaining how selected organizations and the community they serve benefit from Google Fiber. If selected, how will your organization measure the impact Google Fiber has on those served by your organization? Describe evaluation methods, goals, and objectives.

If selected for this program, ACS will track the addition of programs and services made possible through the Google Fiber connection and the number of clients that make use of these services. We anticipate that the immediate result will be the expansion of video conferencing and distance learning capabilities.

### **Community**

*(responses required for all agencies)*

1. Briefly describe how Google Fiber will enhance public participation in your organization's service.

ACS serves children, young adults and families that are part of the Austin community. Google Fiber will increase our ability to connect our clients with support networks in the community, whether that is kinship groups, service providers, and government and court systems.

2. Briefly describe how your organization promotes digital inclusion.

ACS has had a long history of recognizing the importance of digital inclusion and the potential power that technology can have in connecting our clients to the support networks that are critical for a positive outcome. ACS has provided computer access and computer education opportunities to its clients for more than 14 years. Since 2009, with the construction of a campus with client computer access in each residential building, ACS has partnered with Dell and their Powering the Possible program to provide educational and mentorship opportunities for our clients. This program has focused on important life skills such as job searching and interviewing skills.



3. Will bringing Google Fiber to your organization help the underserved? Please explain.

A Google Fiber connection would help ACS provide additional services to our clients – children, young adults and families who are amongst the most vulnerable in our community and who have traditionally been underserved. An example of this would be allowing us to expand our ability to use video conferencing to connect clients with family support networks or the court system. ACS already has an infrastructure including video conferencing equipment provided by LifeSize and uses this capability to connect with courts and other community stakeholders. The additional bandwidth resources provided by a Google Fiber connection would allow us to dramatically expand our capacity for the quality and numbers of these sorts of connections for our clients.

4. How much of your community will benefit from the Google Fiber connection?

ACS firmly believes that our community is best served when its most vulnerable members are provided the support needed to be successful and integrated into a just community. The expanded opportunities offered by Google Fiber to provide services such as online education resources, development of and communication with support networks, and better, less costly ways for staff members to do their work will benefit our clients and the community in which they will live.

5. Briefly describe how your organization will offer a new community service as a result of the Google Fiber connection.

The bandwidth provided by the Google Fiber connection will allow us to expand our use of video conferencing and distance learning. Both of these services have proven effective when used, but with expanded capacity and the services that will certainly be developed as a result of this capacity, ACS expects to make greater future use of these services.

### Innovation

*(responses required for all agencies)*

1. Please describe the potential innovative applications that could be developed with a gigabit connection.

Many of the innovative applications that will be developed as a result of the bandwidth provided by Google Fiber have yet to be imagined, but ACS believes that those transformational applications will be developed and will allow us to do our work better and with less cost. Obvious areas where the bandwidth of Google Fiber will make an immediate difference are in video conferencing and distance learning. Both of these areas are of great interest to ACS and will improve the way that we provide services to our clients.

2. Does your organization have or foresee high bandwidth applications?

Yes, ACS has developed an ongoing technology strategy that embraces online applications such as cloud solutions, video conferencing, and distance learning. ACS has been using hosted database solutions since 2006 for our client tracking, and we have transitioned to Microsoft's Office 365 hosted services. We anticipate a continued emphasis on online applications going forward in line with our technology strategy and industry direction, all of which indicate that more capacity for these bandwidth-intensive solutions will be needed. It is our goal to move all organizations of the LIFT Alliance to online solutions such as Office 365 to reduce our future costs for technology infrastructure investment and instead use those resources to support operations costs and client services.



3. Briefly describe how your organization is interested in advancing your technology.

ACS has developed a detailed technology strategy that focuses on leveraging our enterprise-class data infrastructure to provide enhanced efficiency and cost savings over time. The heart of this strategy is the standardization of IT infrastructure and policy across the LIFT Alliance agencies and an investment in keeping the technology infrastructure and chosen technology solutions up to date. As part of this effort we have selected services such as Office 365 which capitalize on our developed infrastructure and at the same time reduce the long-term burden on that infrastructure to provide savings on future investments. At the same time we are aware of our responsibility to the organization's mission and the community to spend resources on technology investment wisely, which is why we also are careful to leverage partnerships to do so. A Google Fiber connection would be an outstanding addition to this technology strategy of using forward-looking solutions while leveraging that community partnership with Google to do so with the responsible stewardship of the resources provided by our supporters and stakeholders.

4. Does your organization have the capacity and resources to advance your technologies? Please explain.

ACS has the commitment and resources to maintain and advance its technology infrastructure according to its developed technology strategy. ACS has an IT staff of three people who are able to maintain and expand the organization's technology infrastructure as needed, as well as plan for the future technology needs of the organization. The organization has support from the executive team and the board to maintain strong technology infrastructure, and ACS has an outstanding track record of getting community support for technology. In 2009 ACS built a new 8-building campus in Austin, and with the assistance of a multitude of community partners such as Juniper Networking, the AT&T Pioneers, the Texas Burglar and Fire Alarm Association, LifeSize and a large number of other companies we were able to build a technology infrastructure worth approximately \$1 million for less than \$300,000. That community investment in the ACS technology infrastructure has allowed us to bring industry standard solutions to ACS and positioned us to take advantage of the next wave of innovation.

### **Practical Pragmatic**

*(responses required for all agencies)*

1. Will the connection help your organization financially? How?

A Google Fiber connection will have a significant financial impact and help us devote additional resources to our client services from these savings. Firstly, a Google Fiber connection will provide direct savings on the cost of the Internet connection itself, which is currently approximately \$950.00 per month. We anticipate additional indirect savings from increased capabilities and efficiency that it will provide to staff. In particular, the bandwidth provided by a Google Fiber connection will support our current technology strategy of leveraging cloud based solutions to reduce IT infrastructure replacement and maintenance costs and provide a long term cost savings while expanding the capabilities and effectiveness of the tools available to our staff to meet client needs.

2. Will this be the organization's primary or secondary connection?

Google Fiber will be our primary Internet connection.





3. Does your organization have (or will it have) equipment necessary to connect?

Yes, ACS has an enterprise-class data network and robust technology infrastructure built in 2009. This infrastructure includes Juniper Networking SSG20 firewalls and EX4200 network switches, and a campus fiber optic ring that together provide a gigabit capable network. This will ensure that the data transmission rates provided by a Google Fiber connection can be utilized and the impact of these capabilities maximized.

4. Does your organization currently have access to a high bandwidth connection?

Yes, ACS currently has a 25mbps Internet connection through Grande Communications.

**Applicant's Statement**

I certify that answers given herein are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that false or misleading information given in my application will result in disqualification. I understand and agree that I am required to abide by City of Austin ordinances, policies and rules.

I understand if selected to receive a Google Fiber connection that the organization I represent may be required to:

☒ submit an annual report to the TARA Office explaining how the organization has benefited from the free service.

Scott Mc  
Signature

9/30/2013  
Date

Operations Director  
Title

**Please submit this form to TARA by 4:45 p.m. on Friday, September 30, 2013.**

Email: [digital.inclusion@austintexas.gov](mailto:digital.inclusion@austintexas.gov)

Address: City of Austin – TARA - Municipal Building  
124 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 210  
Austin, Texas 78701

